

ILIODOR, RUSSIA'S "MAD MONK," AGAIN IN U. S.; PLANS TO BECOME A "SECOND BILLY SUNDAY"

One-Time Firebrand, Who Defied Holy Synod and Led Black Hundreds, to Be a Baptist Missionary

WIFE AND CHILDREN HERE TO BE REAL AMERICANS, FORMER PPIEST ASSERTS

Tells of Last Hours of Czar and His Ill-Fated Family, and Demands Severity in Handling Radicals

A small front room of an East Side apartment house the pages of Russia's dark fantastic history are rustling today.

A printer's shop occupies the basement of this New York tenement. A series of brass bells and call tubes, the like of which may be found by the democratic millions up and down the streets of New York, lead to the home of Joseph Podlesney, American Baptist missionary.

Within, as his guest, his picturesque black hair tumbling over his brow, sits Russia's famed "Mad Monk Iliodor." Eleven years ago in that land heavily bolted and barred doors, subterranean passages and backstreets were used to see that no harm came to his magic person. He is the "mad abbot" who headed the Black Hundreds who swept forward with his pilgrimages of fanatical devotees, defied the Holy Synod and ruled Russia through the Czar. The destiny of Ministers lay in his hands!

He is Iliodor, of Tsaritsin, who, with an extravagant sweep of adulation from millions of peasants and the appellation "new favorite of the Czar," held the center of the stage of all Russia. Rasputin displaced him in favor, but so powerful was his influence and personality that it was he who fought his way through revolutionary forces and ministered to the Czar and Czarina their last two hours before they were killed. And the mad monk predicts the return of a new Czar—a democratic Czar—within two years.

Yesterday in New York he rode on the top of a Fifth avenue bus. All the while his three little children were playing games with the little Podlesney girl up and down Eleventh street. The first thing he did after disembarking with his wife and little ones from the steamship Lithuania last Thursday was to take out his first papers for citizenship. In 1918, when he was in America before, he became interested in the Baptist Church. Now he is joining it.

A Second Billy Sunday Is Dream of Mad Monk

He has come to America to become in due time another Billy Sunday.

Iliodor made this announcement last night through the kindness of his interpreter, young Podlesney, whose father is a Baptist minister. He made it in picturesque Russian and for a moment the little room with its freight of history echoed with the oratory which is said to be the powerful man's magic gift.

"I understand those millions of hearts," he said; "it was because I understood the hearts of the masses of the people and the heart of the Czar, too, that I was able to hold Russia. This was my power." His eyes, the deep blue eyes of the mystic, glittered. He leaned over the table in the center of the room. The gas light shone down peculiarly on the anachronism of his Old-World face and his neat American business man's suit.

"And human hearts are the same all over the world." He raised his hand knowingly as though to sweep away all doubts; his hand, often raised to sway the destinies of 150,000,000 people, still made memorial gestures. "Ah, I know," he said.

"I had my power with Russia because I spoke sincere words," he continued volubly, "because I was not afraid to tell the truth. I was afraid to tell no one the truth. I told the Czar the truth about Rasputin, but he would not listen. It was his downfall. I preached the truth to the masses. It is the same with Billy Sunday here. He understands the masses and the needs of their hearts. And I, too." His strangely white hand beat his breast. "At first, because of my lack of English, I will work among the Russian people. But then as I learn I will go to the Americans. In time I hope to wield the influence here I wielded in my own country."

Young Mr. Podlesney, sitting politely by, translated all these words and explained that Iliodor had also said he hoped to be in time a second Billy Sunday.

At this moment in the interview the picturesque figure of a man stood up and walked over to the corner of the room. There in a brass bed and under a bright pink quilt nestled his three children—Sergius, seven; Hope, five, and little Iliodor, four. The Mad Monk of Russia turned the youngest gently in his arms. His hair was fair. He wore little blue pajamas. His cheek was hot and pink where it had rested close to the pillow. Blue eyes, opened in interrupted sleep, cast a bold look at his disturber.

"That is my little American," Iliodor proudly said, "he was born in this country when we were here in 1918."

Little Iliodor was the only one asleep of the little fledglings in the pink down quilt of a nest. The others were wide-eyed and none the worse for having nearly perished in the quicksand as they made their escape from Russia. Only when their mother, amber of eyes and hair, came over toward the bed did they duck under the covers and pretend they were not listening to what papa Iliodor was saying. When a little later the talk came to Christmas and a Christmas tree there was open revolt in the sleeping quarters.

"They will have a tree," their papa said emphatically, giving as much attention to the project as if it were the time he told Prime Minister Stolypin to do as he ordered.

Small pink mountains of glee rose here and there in the bed.

"They will have it with me," said the little Podlesney girl, who is seven. It was the first time she had spoken, though she, too, was listening to everything that went on. Her eyes were shining.

There are 18,000,000 people starving in Russia, Iliodor had said a little before. Half of them would rush to America if the Soviet Government would permit. Millions of these, he said, are little children. The three in the bed nestled snugly. Here at least were those who would not have to give the roses from their cheeks to Russia.

The father looked proudly at his little ones as he bade them go back to sleep and went once more to the table. Many pictures hung on the walls. The windows were peevily



Sergius Trufanoff, better known as the "Mad Monk Iliodor"



The figures represent an angel and St. Mary

hung with curtains and the bureau carefully festooned in honor of its visiting family. A setting appropriate indeed for one who would translate a life rich in fantastic color and storm into terms of quiet domesticity and democracy.

Once at the beginning of the rise of his power Iliodor preached at Tsaritsin what the Holy Synod decided was heresy. The synod ordered him to proceed to Crimea "for restoration of his health." Instead of doing so Iliodor went directly to St. Petersburg and obtained an interview with the Czar. His Majesty, under the advice of the Metropolitan Anthony, authorized the young monk to return to Tsaritsin and officiate at the Easter service.

Once he won a victory over the revolutionaries leading the people and singing, "Save, Lord, Thy People." Eleven times the revolution-

comes of Grecian royal ancestry. She will be a real American now, though, and so will my children. I have planned for Sergius that he be a preacher. I have planned for Hope that she be a doctor, like her mamma expected to be. For little Iliodor we have not yet decided.

The public career of "Iliodor, the Mad Monk of Russia," likewise known as Serge Michailowitch Trufanoff, began in 1906, when, from the monastery at Tsaritsin during a period of counter-revolution and massacres, he began the spreading of his propaganda against "democrats, infidels, Jews and Russian fools." He became agitator and leader of the Black Hundreds, the dark-reactionary forces in the empire. He headed fantastic pilgrimages and defied the Synod, but Russian dignitaries and statesmen soon began to fear him, because the Czar felt under his influence. High dignitaries of the Church and prominent officials welcomed him and gave him official receptions, because they knew who was the real power behind the monk.

He made wild attacks on every one in power save the Czar himself, but such was his influence, and that of the Black Hundreds, who swept with their torches behind him, that the Premier, Stolypin, himself was powerless to take

told him if he did not listen Russia would be overrun by revolution. He decided the wrong way. That was the great falling of the Czar. He listened with other people's ears. He saw with other people's eyes. He was not a Czar of the people working directly with his subjects. He did not understand his people.

It was then Iliodor, with his thoughts imprisoned behind glittering eyes and heavy black brows, made this rather momentous prediction:

"Inside of two years we will have another Czar. Not the same sort of a Czar—a democratic one this time, who will be close to his people. Bolshevism will be done for in two years." The days of Kings are not over.

But he did not go on with the thought because once more he returned to the subject of Nicholas and the downfall of the monarchical system in Russia. Only this time there was a softer note in his fluent, sonorous voice. It was the speech rather of a man who had looked on the sadder human aspect of watching a great nation fall: who had seen pomp and royal rubric swept away and the relationship of a great ruler and his favorite reduced to simply this: the giving of a piece of bread.

Hunger! The physical hunger of a monarch who had ruled over 150,000,000 of people!

Gave Their Last Meal To Czar and Czarina

"I gave them their last meal," he said quite simply. "I saw them two hours before they died in the house where they were kept prisoners. The Czarina, who was the more masterful of the two, bowed her head low. The Czar stood by a spinning wheel and the Czarina was trying to work on a pillow. One of their children, a daughter, was with them. But before the end came they had brought the others, who were not far away, so that they might all be massaged together."

Iliodor pictured the Russia of today as a babe and compared America to a big brother standing by and powerless to help. Bolshevism, he said, was choking Russia, and he pointed out that here in America we are too lenient with radicals.

"America Too Lenient With Radical Element"

"You are too delicate with them," he said with emphasis, and this time his eyes held fire. "You are too lenient by far. Harsh measures are needed for your extremists, who are linked with the extremists of Russia and supplied with funds by them. You are too lenient with them. It was the same with the Czar. Had they listened to me they would have been warned in time, but they laughed at the thought of the revolution as a foolish boy's parts of the country. For eighteen months he lived in this way, sometimes with the Red Army and sometimes with the White Army."

"In 1918," he continued, "I was betrayed to the Bolshevik officials and I was told these officials wished me to become head of the Russian Church that I might undermine its influence and personnel to make its workings valueless. I was put in jail and threatened, but released and put under surveillance. In October, 1921, the officials told me they wanted to get rid of Patriarch Tikhon and were willing that he should be killed or imprisoned."

No decision was made until Iliodor learned through private sources that unless he took action against Tikhon he would be executed. It was then he decided on the quick and urgent trip to America. He left Russia without a passport, but was permitted to sail because of a document issued in the American Consulate in Riga. Instructions to issue the papers had been cabled, it was said, as the result of the request of Baptist church officials. The trip, however, that preceded the actual setting forth from Riga was in itself an adventure for the whole Iliodor family.

Surveying the entire Russian situa-



he Monk in his robes—a photograph taken before he left Russia



Monk Iliodor, his wife and children, who hope to become Americans in time. The children are Sergius, seven years old; Hope, five, and Iliodor, four. The last named was born in the United States

ists tried him for his life. In the end they offered him the head of the Russian Church.

Had to Flee to Riga To Escape His Enemies

It was when he heard his life was in danger because of his refusal to accede to his enemies' demands that he put his wife and two younger children in a place of safety and then with his older son, Sergius, made the long trip to Riga in a wagon. His wife and children followed him on foot.

His voice took on softer accents as he spoke of his wife and children. His eyes followed her as she walked here and there in the other room helping in the little tasks of the kitchen. She wore a blue serge dress and seemed about thirty years old. Iliodor broke his vows when he married her.

"She was studying to be a doctor when we met," he said, "but she never took her degree. Her name is Narynka, which means 'hope,' and she

action. Millions of peasants were rallying to his word, calling him a saint and a martyr, in whose favor the Czar had interceded to save from death. Loyal demonstrators at the time the Russian sky around Tsaritsin. The endless repetition of the national anthem by thousands assembled around the church resounded and deafening cheers for the Emperor, the Empress and the royal family echoed from the hills.

Spent Year in Prison With Rise of Rasputin

Only this was his reign of favor and glory interrupted for Iliodor when Rasputin supplanted the Cossack monk as spiritual adviser to their royalties. At the time Iliodor was sent to prison for a year, and it was only through a narrow escape that he was saved a trip to Siberia.

Speaking of this period of Russia's dark past, he said:

"It was listening to the advice of Rasputin that proved the fatal step for the Czar. He was at the road where he might have done one of two things. I said to him, 'If you listen to me you will be lost. Russia will be the page of revolution, but you will

tion Iliodor said that bolshevism was doomed to downfall, that Lenin and Trotzky had never accomplished anything of good to the Russian people and that the greatest single need in Russia at the present moment was a physical one.

"They need food and clothing," he said almost brusquely as though the need was so obvious that it could not help but shout out to the world for itself.

The "mad monk," in spite of his stern, picturesque appearance, has the suggestion of the child about him. He has the child-heart enthusiasm of the foreigner which Americans with all their national youth do not seem to achieve. He stands six feet and his Slavic origin is clearly traceable in his pale, well-moulded features. He smiles frequently and just now seems extraordinarily happy.

America stretches before him as never a wonderland as ever it stretched before the humblest immigrant who sees "Status of Liberty" beckoning to a life of gold.

Iliodor does not seem to be a man who has ever known the taste of gold. He said here in America he had never seen a gold mine. He said he had never seen a gold mine. He said he had never seen a gold mine.